

## The Shalom Center

# A Time for Grief and Action

Dear friends, Today in the Jewish calendar is 17 Tammuz. Traditionally, it is the date when the walls of Jerusalem fell to an invading Babylonian Army. So today is when the walls were down, and the world paused before a choice: With the walls gone, friendship or destruction? Three weeks later on Tisha B'Av (this year July 17-18) came the burning of the Holy Temple. And on the same date centuries later, the invading Roman Empire burned the rebuilt Temple.

We who write you are an array of leaders of the Eco-Jewish movement, and we are writing to connect that ancient trauma with the suffering of our own Temple Earth, the holy Place of all life-forms, including humankind.

Today, and three weeks from today, and three months from today, and three years from today, are times when we choose: Friendship amongst all life-forms in our Temple Earth, **OR** destruction of the holiest place we know.



Moon and Sun Tree of Life Mard... by artoselectio... Zazzle



We recognize that our suffering is caused by a subset of our own species, and that it will take action by communities of our own species to heal these deadly wounds. Our statement follows, and then the first of a series of resources to use for #TishaBAv4TempleEarth. We will continue to send out these resources, and we welcome your sending us poems, songs, graphics, brief texts, and reports of your own planned actions.

Email them to [9Av@theshalomcenter.org](mailto:9Av@theshalomcenter.org) and to receive Earth-affirming resources for Tisha B'Av and the holydays that follow, please register at <https://theshalomcenter.org/civcrm/petition/sign?sid=31&reset=1>

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## ***Tisha B'Av for Temple Earth***

1. We call upon Jews this year to intertwine on Tisha B'Av (July 17-18) the traditional lamentation for the ancient destruction of two holy Temples with our grief and sacred action in response to the worsening danger to Temple Earth -- the survival and integrity of many species and many human communities.
2. We encourage Tisha B'Av gatherings to include passages of sacred text, art, and music, old and new, celebrating our love of Planet Earth, mourning the forms of its destruction, and committing us to act for its protection and renewal.
3. We encourage all members of our community that, as part of our observance of Tisha B'Av, we undertake public acts of commitment to change public and corporate policy, as well as action by Jewish groups and institutions themselves. We suggest this in part as a way of embodying the last prayer of traditional Lamentation: "Turn us to You, YHWH, and we shall act to return. Make our days new as they were long ago."

*Action on public policy might include writing a letter or paying a visit to Senators, Congressmembers, state or local legislators or corporate officials. We might urge the inclusion in the proposed Jobs and Infrastructure Act of massive grants for solarizing homes, building electric railway systems and frequent service stations for electric autos, requiring retrofitting for all public buildings in renewable energy, organizing coastal wind-turbine arrays, financing restorative agriculture and urban organic garden/ farms, etc.*



*Actions in and by the Jewish community might include creating congregation-based solar co-ops; funding renewable energy and conservation in new and retrofitting older communal buildings; creating urban farms, community-supported agriculture, grocery co-ops, and changes in food choices for communal celebrations; using energy-efficient mass transportation, biking, and low-emission or no-emission automobiles; Moving Our Money from institutions that invest in energy choices that scorch and damage Earth, to institutions that invest in Protecting Our Planet.*

4. As we approach Tisha B'Av and other sacred days, we keep this in mind: Many of our holydays are the offspring of a long sacred love affair between Earth and the Jewish people. Now that both Earth and human Earthlings -- adamah and adam, in Hebrew -- are in serious wounded trouble, let us explore reawakening and reframing their offspring, our festivals and fast days, to rejuvenate their endangered parents.

***Signers: [\*Indicates the organization is listed for identification only]***

*Rabbi Katy Allen, Jewish Climate Action Network – MA*

*Rabbi Tamara Cohen, \*Moving Traditions; author, “Eicha for the Earth”\*

*Rabbi Zelig Golden, Wilderness Torah*

*Mirele Goldsmith, Jewish Earth Alliance*

*Rabbi/Rav Kohenet Jill Hammer, PhD*

*Mark Jacobs, \*Meridian; Founding Executive Director, COEJL*



*Ace Leveen, Jewish Climate Action Network –NYC*

*Jakir Manela, Pearlstone Center*

*Rabbi Natan Margalit, Earth-Based Judaism*

*Rabbi Jonah Pesner, Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism*

*Nigel Savage, Hazon*

*David Schreiber, Greenvest*

*Rabbi David Seidenberg, Neo-Hasid*

*Yoni Stadlin, Eden Village Camp*

*Rabbi Daniel Swartz, Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life  
(COEJL)*

*Rabbi Arthur Waskow, The Shalom Center*